

GOVERNMENT 310L

FALL 2011

#38560 TTH 8:00-9:15 IN MEZES 1.306

#38590 TTH 2-3:15 IN GARRISON 0.102

AMERICAN AND TEXAS GOVERNMENT

Prof. David V. Edwards

Office Hours in Batts 3.126:

Tuesday and Thursday 9:20-10:50

And by appointment via 471-5121 or dedwards@austin.utexas.edu
(or whenever else you find me in my office)

Teaching Assistants and their office hours and email addresses:

For #38560 at 8:00:

Jeremy Kushner (kushnerj5000@gmail.com)

OH: Monday & Wednesday 9:30-11 in Batts 1.118

Christian Sorace (christiansorace@gmail.com)

OH: Tuesday & Thursday 11-12:30 in Batts 1.118

For #38590 at 2:00:

Ben Hardee (lycosinternational@hotmail.com)

OH: Tuesday 3:30-5 & Wednesday 2-3:30 in Batts 1.118

Ryan Lloyd (lloyd418@gmail.com)

OH: Thursday 12:30-2 and 3:30-5 in Batts 1.118

Course Description and Objectives

Our basic goal in this course is to help you develop analytical skills, concepts and knowledge useful in understanding American and Texas politics in general and current events in particular. We believe that these skills and concepts will help you to be a better critical and creative thinker about politics, and a more effective participant in politics should you decide to do this at any time.

To achieve this goal we shall focus on disputes that divide political actors (individuals, groups, and institutions), which we shall analyze using tools that you can also apply to situations in your own everyday life. We shall learn to examine American and Texas politics in terms of *disputes over claims to the authority to decide what is, what causes what, what's right, what works, and what should be done by whom in politics*. We will apply this framework to the major institutions (Congress, the presidency, the bureaucracy, and the courts at the national level and the Legislature, the governor, the bureaucracy, and the courts at the state level), the "inputs" into their operations (public opinion, participation, parties, interest groups, social movements, the media), and the "outputs" (civil liberties, civil rights, human rights, and various domestic and global public policies at the national level, and Texas policies at the state level).

Class Sessions

Class sessions will be devoted to a combination of lectures and discussions on the topic for the day and on current events from the daily *New York Times* (which will be required reading Monday through Friday all semester). Lectures will expand upon or relate to the readings assigned for each session, but *they will not summarize these readings*. Instead, **lectures and discussions will be based on the assumption that you have done the reading assignments before class. Lectures will not summarize the textbook readings. Please bring your copy of the day's New York Times to class every class day so we can refer to it as relevant.**

Required Reading

Most of your reading assignments on American politics will be in **the textbook: Greenberg & Page: The Struggle for Democracy, 10th edition**, published last spring in paperback by Longman Pearson. New and used copies should be available at the Coop and on the web from Amazon and other sellers. If you prefer, you can purchase an electronic online edition of the book instead of the printed version, at a price approximately half that of the printed edition. At the end of this syllabus you will find instructions on accessing MyPoliSciLab, which includes various study aids and an electronic version of the book and is made available to those who purchase a new copy of the printed book by means of an access code that comes with the book.

MyPoliSciLab is optional, not required. In addition, ***I am putting multiple copies of the book on reserve in PCL*** for those who prefer to read the book that way.

As you probably know, the Texas Legislature requires that you take two semesters of American and Texas politics as part of your undergraduate degree. Readings on Texas politics will come from materials developed by the Government Department and posted on the web, where you can read them without charge via this URL: <http://texaspolitics.laits.utexas.edu/> .

Class session topics and reading assignments, along with scheduled exam dates, are listed at the end of this syllabus. The Texas assignments will be listed on the reading assignments pages as "TP ch. X".)

The other major required reading is ***The New York Times***, daily Monday through Friday through the end of the semester, starting Monday August 30 and ending Friday December 2, which will be made available by special reduced student-rate. The sheet attached to the end of this syllabus gives you details on ordering, but here are the basic facts:

To subscribe at the special classroom rate, call 1-888-NYT COLL (1-888-698-2655). You can choose Monday through Friday at \$33.50 for the semester from August 30 through December 2 (no delivery on Labor Day and during Thanksgiving Break), or seven days a week for \$85. (The newsstand cost is \$2.00 a day and \$6.00 on Sunday, so the rate you get is a very major savings of about half.) You are only required to read it Monday through Friday, but the Sunday paper is full of interesting and valuable sections with many relevant articles, and I encourage you to read it too, which you can do free on the web as a subscriber to the print edition Monday through Friday. In most cases, the paper will be delivered to your home, arriving before 7 am. If you live on campus or in a large apartment complex, you will have to select a campus lockbox, from the options listed on the attached sheet, and which the operator will also give you, at which to get your paper each day Monday through Friday; weekend delivery is not an option on campus.

Your subscription to the print edition includes a free subscription to the online edition, which by itself would cost more than your reduced rate print subscription. You may read the *Times* online at www.nytimes.com if you subscribe to the print edition.

However, I recommend that you clip and file important articles so that you will have them at hand when we deal with their topic and to use in preparing for exams. It would be very costly to print all those articles, and hard to manage them online if you don't print them out.

There will also be occasional brief class "downloads" that will be "delivered" via our course website on Blackboard. Some of these downloads will be required reading, and others will be optional supplementary materials; I will indicate which are required and which optional.

Course Organization, Requirements, and Grading

There will be three exams in the course, the first two given during class time as specified on the reading assignments and class topics sheets and the third, the final exam, given at the date and time determined by the Registrar. There will also be two or three quizzes given in class at various times during the semester. The quizzes together will count 10 percent of your grade, and will be timed to help you discover whether you are studying effectively. The first class exam will count 20 percent, the second 30 percent, and the final 40 percent, so that you will get additional benefit from whatever improvement you achieve in your performance during the semester.

There will be one comprehensive makeup exam and one comprehensive makeup quiz, described below, for the entire semester.

The exams will include some multiple choice questions, but the greater part will consist of short essay questions, and you will likely have limited choice among these essay questions. The exams will cover the lectures, readings in the textbook and the online Texas textbook, material from the *New York Times*, videos and audios from class, and any required "downloads." There are no exams on file for you to examine because each exam is tailored to the current readings and other materials plus this semester's classroom happenings and current political developments. However, I will give you in class sample questions along with guidance on how to answer them effectively before each exam, so you'll know what sort of questions to expect.

Attendance will not be a part of your grade, but class sessions will include lecture material and video clips for which you will be responsible on exams, so regular attendance is highly recommended. In addition, there may be occasional extra credit opportunities in class available to students attending that day.

Grades will be assigned on a ten-points per letter grade basis, including pluses and minuses as specified by University regulations. **We do not curve grades**, so you are not competing directly with your fellow students; your good work will be rewarded on its own merits.

There will be a special review session just before each exam conducted by the TAs.

We are unable to make provisions for your submitting extra work for extra credit, so be sure you do your best work on the quizzes and exams.

The Comprehensive Makeup Exam

There will be one makeup exam, given sometime after the second exam and the quizzes and covering the entire semester's work to that point, to substitute for and count the same percentage as either exam or quiz you missed with a valid excuse.

You must have a valid excuse—observance of a religious holy day, a death in the immediate family, a serious medical problem, or required absence for participation in a University-sponsored event, academic or athletic—for missing one of the regular exams in order to be allowed to take this makeup, and you must clear this excuse with your TA or me, furnishing appropriate documentation, in advance of the exam you miss or immediately upon your return to campus in the event of an emergency.

Peer-Led Undergraduate Studying

As an experiment, we will be participating in this program, sponsored by the Sanger Learning and Career Center in Jester, which provides support for student-led study groups. This optional opportunity for special discussion groups will be explained in the first class session.

Contacting Us with Questions

I have prepared this detailed syllabus to serve as a course guide throughout the semester. If you have questions the syllabus does not answer, please feel free to ask me or a TA after class or during office hours, or by email. You will be held responsible for all the course requirements and procedures described here, so please be sure to familiarize yourself with them.

If you have any questions about the reading assignment for a given day, you may raise them with me or a TA before or after class. Otherwise, you may raise questions in my office hours or either of your TAs' office hours. ***Please feel free to raise your hand and ask a question in class during lecture or discussion if you believe an answer to it might be helpful to others as well as to you.*** If you do not ask questions about course materials, we shall have to assume that you understand them.

We also encourage you to bring questions and problems to us in our office hours in a timely manner, because the earlier we address them, the better for your experience of the course as well as for your course grade. If you cannot see us during our office hours, we can make special arrangements. The best way to do this is to email us. My contact information and that of your TAs are on this syllabus.

Availability of Grades and Exams and Keeping of Records

Your exam grades will be posted on Blackboard. Your exams will be returned in class or you may pick them up in your TA's office hours, where you may discuss your performance on them during office hours, or by appointment. Your TA keeps the records of all your grades, and is therefore the one you should consult first if you have any questions about them.

Appealing Your Grade

If you believe an error or an incorrect judgment or assessment has been made in grading your exam, please follow these procedures in a timely manner:

- Discuss the matter with your TA during office hours or by appointment.
- If you are dissatisfied with your TA's decision, you may appeal to me. I will then re-grade the entire exam, and you will receive whatever grade I assign to you, whether it is higher or lower than what your TA gave you.
- I will also be glad to discuss our decisions with you personally.

Dropping the Course

University requirements for dropping a course are listed in the Academic Calendar on the University website. I observe those regulations.

Honesty, Dishonesty, and Plagiarism

Plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty are serious offenses punishable by failure of the course. The administration asks that you familiarize yourself with the U.T. Honor Code and the nature of plagiarism by consulting the following site: <http://registrar.utexas.edu/catalogs/gi09-10/ch01/index.html>.

Disabilities

If you have a learning disability or another disability that requires special arrangements for examtaking, you may request appropriate academic accommodations from the Division of Diversity and Community Engagement, Services for Students with Disabilities, 471-6259, following which you should consult with your TA well in advance of each exam to work out appropriate approved arrangements.

Counseling and Related Assistance

The UT Counseling and Mental Health Center (CMHC): <http://cmhc.utexas.edu/> has asked that we make available the following information about valuable campus resources available to you:

- --For information about students with urgent needs : <http://www.cmhc.utexas.edu/talktosomeone.html>
- --CMHC's 24/7/365 Telephone Counseling Line: 471-CALL/2255; <http://www.cmhc.utexas.edu/24hourcounseling.html>
- --To find out about making an appointment: <http://cmhc.utexas.edu/appointments.html>
- --For information about our Be That One Suicide Prevention Program, check out <http://www.cmhc.utexas.edu/bethatone/>

* Behavior Concerns Advice Line- Concerned about someone on campus? BCAL provides a central resource for UT faculty, students, and staff who may have concerns about the behavior or well-being of another member of the campus community. BCAL is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. For more information contact 512-232-5050 or www.utexas.edu/safety/bcal

Evaluations and Suggestions

We invite your suggestions of ways we can improve the course throughout the semester, and will conduct a midterm evaluation for this purpose as well as our own detailed end-of-semester evaluations. Please feel free to offer criticisms and suggestions, either in person or by note or email (anonymously, if you wish), to me or to your TA at any time during the semester. Students often have extremely valuable ideas to offer, and the sooner you let us hear from you, the sooner we can make whatever changes are desirable and feasible.

Also, if you know of an interesting website relevant to our course materials, please let me know, and feel free to share such information with classmates via the email system in Blackboard. **(However, please do not use that system for partisan political purposes—something which is against University regulations.)**

A Final Note

We find American politics fascinating, and hope you will, too—especially in this year in which power is changing hands in the House of Representatives and major policies on economic recovery, healthcare reform, and energy and environment, among other topics, continue to be debated. We will try to make all aspects of this course as interesting and informative as possible. We depend on you to be attentive to the readings and classroom happenings, and hope you will participate as actively as the size and structure of the course—over which none of us has control—allow, and that you will feel free to share your views—and any interesting materials on our subject that you come across. Your decision to make the course a valuable one for yourself will help to make it valuable for others as well. We hope you will find the course both interesting and enjoyable.

CLASS SESSION TOPICS AND READING ASSIGNMENTS

No.	Date	Day	Topic	Reading Assignment
1	Aug 20	Th	Introduction to the course	
	Part I:		<i>FOUNDATIONS</i>	
2	Aug 31	T	Studying American politics & democracy via the <i>N.Y. Times</i>	<i>N.Y. Times</i> Mon. Aug 30 & Tues Aug 31
3	Sept 1	Th	Studying American politics & democracy	Textbook(<i>Struggle for Democracy</i>) Ch 1
4	Sept 6	T	Studying the Founders & Framers and the Constitution	Ch 2
5	Sept 8	Th	Studying federalism & Texas government	Ch 3 + TP (Texas Politics website) “Constitution” ch
6	Sept 13	T	Deeper foundations of American and Texas politics	Ch 4 + TP “Texas Political Culture” ch.
	Part II:		<i>LINKAGES & INPUTS</i>	
7	Sept 15	Th	Public opinion	Ch 5 +(optional) TP “Polling” ch
8	Sept 20	T	The news media	Ch 6
9	Sept 22	Th	Interest groups	Ch 7+ TP “Interest Groups” ch
10	Sept 27	T	Social movements	Ch 8
11	Sept 29	Th	FIRST EXAM	
12	Oct 4	T	Political parties	Ch 9 + TP “Political Parties” ch
13	Oct 6	Th	Participation, voting, and elections	Ch 10
	Part III:		<i>INSTITUTIONS</i>	
14	Oct 11	T	Congress part I	Ch 11
15	Oct 13	Th	Congress part II and Texas Legislature	TP “Legislative Branch” ch
16	Oct 18	T	Presidency part I	Ch 12
17	Oct 20	Th	Presidency part II and Texas Governor	TP “Executive Branch” ch
18	Oct 25	T	Bureaucracy—Federal and Texas	Ch 13 + “Bureaucracy” ch
19	Oct 27	Th	SECOND EXAM	
20	Nov 1	T	Courts and the legal system part I	Ch 14
21	Nov 3	Th	Courts and the legal system part II and Texas legal system	TP “Justice System” ch.
	Part IV:		<i>OUTPUTS: POLICIES</i>	
22	Nov 8	T	Civil liberties	Ch 15
23	Nov 10	Th	Civil rights and human rights	Ch 16
24	Nov 15	T	Studying public policy	Ch 17

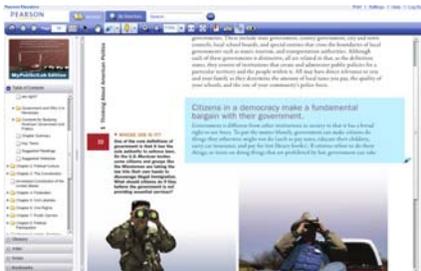
25	Nov 17	Th	The federal budget and economic policy in U.S. and Texas	Ch 18 + TP “Political Economy” and “Poverty” chs
26	Nov 22	T	Energy and environment	To be announced
	Nov 25	Th	THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY	
27	Nov 29	T	Foreign and military policy	Ch 19
28	Dec 1	Th	Conclusions	To be announced
	Dec 10	Sat	<i>FINAL EXAM 2-5 pm for 38560 (8)</i>	
	Dec 12	Mon	<i>FINAL EXAM 9-12 am for 38590 (2)</i>	

Register for MyPoliSciLab today to save time and improve results.



MyPoliSciLab is the most proven and most used online resource for American Government

MyPoliSciLab has been completely redesigned to make it easier for you to study lecture material, apply what you've learn, and participate in the political conversation.



STUDY

MyPoliSciLab makes preparing for your next test or quiz more effective. You can highlight or take notes in our interactive eBook or take our pre, post, and chapter exams to hone your knowledge. You can also check out the flashcard tool to study key term definitions.



APPLY

After you study the material covered in your lecture you can now go apply that knowledge to over 150 videos and multimedia activities. A wide variety of exercises and will help you gain a deeper understanding of course concepts.



PARTICIPATE

In MyPoliSciLab you can now participate in the political conversation. You can take a citizenship test to see how well you score and even register to vote! There is also a weekly current events quiz and poll where you can see what other students just like you think about various issues.

How to Register for MyPoliSciLab:

To register for **MyPoliSciLab**, you will need:

- **Your school's zip code:** _____
- **A MyPoliSciLab student access code** (packaged with your new text, available standalone at your bookstore, or available for purchase with a credit card at www.mypoliscilab.com).
- **A valid email address.**

In addition, your instructor will provide you with:

A **Course ID** needed to join your instructor's course. _____

I ALREADY HAVE AN ACCESS CODE:

Go to www.mypoliscilab.com

Click on **Students** in the "Register or Buy Access" box

Click **I already have an access code**

Click through the next two screens answering appropriately. (if you do not know if your access code contains an E-Book ask your instructor)

Select your book- Books are listed alphabetically by author.

Read the Pearson License Agreement and Privacy Policy and click the **I Accept button**.

Do you have a Pearson Education account?

If **Yes** – Fill in your login name and password. (TIP! You can use the same login in and password that you are using for your other Pearson products.)

If **No** – Follow the onscreen instructions to create a login name and password.

If **Not Sure** – Enter your email address and click **Search**.

Enter your access code in the boxes provided and click **Next**.

Enter and select the required information in the appropriate fields on the next page and click **Next**.

Review and print your **Confirmation and Summary** page (a confirmation will also be sent to your email address).

TIP! Be sure to take note of your login name and password—write them down or save them on your computer in a place you will not forget

I DON'T HAVE AN ACCESS CODE:

Purchase access online.

Go to www.mypoliscilab.com

Click **Students** in the "Register or Buy Access" box.

Click **I need to buy access**.

Select your version- you can purchase MyPoliSciLab with or without an E-book of your textbook.

Select your book- Books are listed alphabetically by author.

Read the Pearson License Agreement and Privacy Policy

Select "I Accept"

Do you have a Pearson Education account?

If **Yes** – Fill in your login name and password. (TIP! You can use the same login in and password that you are using for your other Pearson products.)

If **No** – Follow the onscreen instructions to create a login name and password.

If **Not Sure** – Enter your email address and click **Search**.

Enter in all appropriate information in the blank fields.

Enter your Payment information and Billing information and click "Continue" – You can pay

Still need help? Visit our Customer Technical Support website at
<http://247pearsoned.custhelp.com>.

How to Join My Professor's Course:

If your instructor is utilizing the gradebook feature you will be given "Class ID," which you will use to join the Grade Tracker grade book for your course.

Doing so will allow your instructor to view your results on assignments and online activities. You will need to "Join your class" just once, and you may do so as soon as you have your Class ID.

1. **Log in** to your MyPoliSciLab course.
2. On the top right navigation, click the "**Join a Class**" tab.
3. **Enter your Class ID** (looks like cm123456) and click **Next**.
4. Review the course information and confirm by clicking **Next**.
5. You will see a Class Confirmation page:
Click the **Enter Class Now** button to immediately access your resources!

Technical Support

Visit our Customer Technical Support website at <http://247pearsoned.custhelp.com>.

Here you can:

- **Search** frequently asked questions.
- **Ask a Question** and receive a detailed response, monitored 24/7.
- **Chat** online with a live representative.

Visit <http://247pearsoned.custhelp.com> for chat support hours.

You can also start by searching our [Online Knowledgebase](#).

Did you Know?

You can now get instant updates, find out what's new, and get real-time answers to your MyPoliSciLab questions.

Friend us on facebook, follow us on twitter, and let us know what you think!



<http://www.facebook.com/MyPoliSciLab>



<http://twitter.com/MyPoliSciLab>

Still need help? Visit our Customer Technical Support website at
<http://247pearsoned.custhelp.com>.